

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-32 without admission and without prejudice.

Please add the following new claims:

33. A method employed in discriminating an action performed by a human from automatic computerized action, the method comprising:
- presenting a human ability challenge having a response component, the human ability challenge having distorted content to reduce the possibility of computerized identification of the content;
- receiving a response to the human ability challenge; and
- comparing the received response to the response component to thereby help determine whether the received response was provided by a human.
34. The method of claim 33, comprising generating the human ability challenge.
35. The method of claim 34, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises generating the response component and generating the human ability challenge using the response component.
36. The method of claim 35, wherein the step of generating the response component comprises randomly generating the response component.
37. The method of claim 35, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises creating a distorted visual representation of the response component.
38. The method of claim 35, wherein the step of generating the human ability challenge comprises creating a distorted audio representation of the response component.

39. The method of claim 33, comprising selecting a type of human ability challenge from a plurality of human ability challenge types.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the step of selecting the type of human ability challenge comprises randomly selecting the type of human ability challenge.

41. The method of claim 39, comprising determining the respondent's identity, and wherein the step of selecting the type of human ability challenge comprises selecting the type of human ability challenge based on the respondent's identity.

42. The method of claim 39, comprising generating the response component based upon the type of human ability challenge selected.

43. The method of claim 33, further comprising selecting the human ability challenge from a plurality of stored human ability challenges.

44. The method of claim 43, wherein the step of selecting comprises randomly selecting the human ability challenge.

45. The method of claim 33, comprising providing a request for authentication for gaining access to a computerized resource, receiving an authentication code, and verifying the code responsive to the request for authentication if the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

46. The method of claim 33, comprising receiving a request for access to a computerized resource and providing access to the resource only if the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

47. The method of claim 33, comprising requesting user confirmation of an action

and accepting user confirmation only if the received response to the human ability challenge matches the response component.

48. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting one or more graphical images representing the response component.

49. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a plurality of graphical images representing identifiable objects and presenting a cognitive question regarding the plurality of graphical images, wherein the response component represents an answer to the question.

50. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting an audio file reciting a question, wherein the response component represents an answer to the question.

51. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a noisy textual image displaying the response component.

52. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting a human ability challenge comprises presenting a natural language question, wherein the response component represents an answer to the natural language question.

53. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of presenting the human ability challenge comprises transmitting the human ability challenge from a server to a client.

54. The method of claim 53, comprising encrypting the response component and transmitting the human ability challenge with the encrypted response component.

55. The method of claim 54, wherein the step of comparing comprises decrypting the

encrypted response component and comparing the decrypted response component to the received response.

56. The method of claim 53, wherein the step of receiving a response to the human ability challenge comprises transmitting the response from the client to the server.

57. The method of claim 53, comprising hashing the response component and transmitting the human ability challenge with the hashed response component.

58. The method of claim 57, wherein the step of comparing comprises hashing the received response and comparing the hashed received response to the hashed response component.

59. A system employed in discriminating an action performed by a human from automatic computerized action, the system comprising:

a first set of computer program instructions for presenting a human ability challenge having a response component, the human ability challenge having distorted content to reduce the possibility of computerized identification of the content;

a second set of computer program instructions for receiving a response to the human ability challenge; and

a third set of computer program instructions for comparing the received response to the response component to thereby help determine whether the received response was provided by a human.

60. The system of claim 59, wherein the first set of computer program instructions resides on a server and the second set of computer program instructions resides on a client

connectable to the server.

61. The system of claim 60, wherein the server comprises a proxy server positioned between an application server and the client.

62. The system of claim 60, wherein the server comprises an application server.

63. The system of claim 59, wherein the first, second and third sets of computer program instructions reside on a single computer.

64. In an on-line system, a method for reducing automated access, the method comprising:

allowing on-line access to data;

presenting a human ability challenge using an output device in response to a request for access to data, the human ability challenge having distorted content to reduce the possibility of computerized identification of the content;

receiving an answer to the human ability challenge; and

verifying that the answer satisfies the human ability challenge before allowing access to data.